

University of Michigan

Board of Regents policies

Sec. 9.03. Recommendations for Honorary Degrees (revised July 2008)

Recommendations for honorary degrees shall be made by an Honorary Degrees Committee, which shall be constituted as follows:

1. Seven members of the University Senate to be appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation of the president from a panel nominated by SACUA which panel shall contain twice the number to be appointed. At least one of the appointed senate members shall be from The University of Michigan-Flint or The University of Michigan-Dearborn. Appointed senate members shall serve for terms of three years each, so adjusted that at least two vacancies shall occur each year.
2. Two university alumni/ae to be appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation of the president from a panel nominated by the Alumni Association which panel shall contain twice the number to be appointed. Appointed alumni/ae members shall serve for terms of two years each, so adjusted that one vacancy shall occur each year.
3. Two students appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation of the president from a panel nominated by MSA which panel shall contain twice the number to be appointed. Appointed student members shall serve for terms of two years each, so adjusted that one vacancy shall occur each year.
4. The provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, the vice president for development, the vice president for government relations, the vice president and secretary of the university, and the president.
5. The dean of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, who shall be chair.

Honorary degrees may be conferred by the Board of Regents at commencement, at university convocations, or at special convocations of the several schools or colleges. Honorary degrees normally will be conferred only when the honoree is present. On rare and unusual occasions an honorary degree may be conferred in absentia.

Honorary Degree Criteria, Guidelines, and Eligibility

Criteria

Nominees should meet one or more of the following:

- The nominee should have demonstrable distinguished achievement in an activity related to the University's missions of research and scholarship, education, or service.
- Ideally, there should be a particular reason for recognition of the nominee by the University of Michigan, such as an association with the University or a relationship of his or her achievement to work that is unique or highly characteristic of Michigan.
- The honorary degree should have a special meaning to the individual being recognized.
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Guidelines

Some types of accomplishments may not generally be regarded in themselves as sufficient reason for consideration, i.e., holding a public office, particular acts of philanthropy, achievement of popular acclaim, or service to the University or to another educational institution.

Eligibility:

Holders of Political Office

Heads of state of other countries may be considered for honorary degrees. Others actively serving in political office are not eligible to receive honorary degrees with the following exceptions:

- President of the United States
- Vice President of the United States
- Governor of Michigan

Exceptions to this policy can be made only by the president, with the advice of the chair of the Honorary Degree Committee.

- University of Michigan faculty members, active or emeritus (including tenure track faculty, lecturers, research faculty and research scientists, clinical faculty, librarians, archivists and curators), are not eligible, except under extraordinary circumstances.
- Faculty who have left the University of Michigan to accept a position elsewhere may be considered.
- Visiting faculty would not ordinarily be deemed to be eligible during their appointments at the University of Michigan.
- Other active employees of the University are also ineligible for consideration, except under extraordinary circumstances.
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Exceptions to these policies can be made only by the president, with the advice of the chair of the Honorary Degree Committee.

Commencement Speakers

Commencement speakers are selected by the president. It is a University of Michigan tradition that individuals delivering the commencement address also receive honorary degrees; therefore, nominations for commencement speakers follow the honorary degree nomination process. On occasion, someone not being conferred an honorary degree gives an address.

University of Georgia

Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (<http://provost.uga.edu/index.php>)

Honorary Degrees

Objective

The granting of honorary degrees is a long standing tradition of universities. Other than the earned doctorate, the honorary degree is the highest recognition that the University of Georgia can bestow and is therefore not lightly given. It is intended to honor a person who has a sustained record of achievements of lasting significance.

Criteria

Persons nominated for consideration for honorary degrees should have made distinguished and broad contributions to society. These may be in the traditional areas of scholarship and creative arts, research and development, the learned professions, public service, or business and industry. The prime and controlling consideration should be excellence.

It is desirable, but by no means required, that the person selected have had some affiliation with the State of Georgia or the University of Georgia. It is also desirable, but by no means required, that at least one recipient of an honorary degree be widely known by the general public.

The following persons ordinarily would not be eligible:

- Persons currently serving on the faculty or staff of the University
- Elected officials of the State of Georgia during their terms of office
- Georgia citizens who are elected holders of national offices

Process

An Honorary Degrees Committee appointed by the President is charged with the responsibility of soliciting and screening nominees for an honorary degree. The Committee is composed of seven members holding three year terms. Appointments to the Committee are from among the faculty and are made following the campus-wide solicitation of recommendations. Early in the academic year the Committee will solicit through the offices of the vice presidents, deans, and University Council Executive Committee nominations for an honorary degree.

Nominations must be supported by individuals who are knowledgeable in the nominee's field of accomplishment and who therefore are in a position to make an evaluation. Each nomination must be accompanied by three or more letters of nomination and a biographical sketch of the individual. The Committee may seek additional information. The Honorary Degrees Committee will screen nominees and recommend, with supporting rationale, up to five finalists to the President. The President, based on the supporting rationale and any additional consultation, will select the one or two persons to

receive an honorary degree and make his recommendation to the Chancellor for consideration by the Board of Regents. Ordinarily the degree will be awarded at the spring commencement.

University of Florida

Honorary Degrees

[Recipients](#)

Other than the earned doctorate, the greatest recognition the University of Florida can give an individual is an honorary degree. Such awards are not given lightly, and relatively few are awarded. The awarding of an honorary degree is recognition of eminent achievement in scholarship or high distinction in public service which exemplifies the purposes and ideals of the University of Florida. More particularly, honorary degrees are awarded for sustained achievements of lasting significance and value, not for a single accomplishment. Preference is given to individuals who are connected in some significant and meaningful way with the state or with the university.

Under no circumstances can a college or other unit of the University of Florida grant an honorary degree and only the University can give the Distinguished Alumnus or Distinguished Achievement Awards. However, colleges may provide other recognitions or honors when it is clearly not a University award. Examples of these awards could include "Outstanding Psychology Graduate" or "Distinguished Journalism Alumnus."

Because the University of Florida is a public university and part of the State University System, the university's policy is that elected or appointed officials of the State of Florida or the Federal Government to whom the university is directly or indirectly answerable are ineligible for honorary degrees. Faculty members, officers, and employees of the university are also ineligible.

Anyone can nominate an individual for an honorary degrees, the nomination must be supported by individuals who are prominent in the candidate's field of accomplishment and in a position to judge the candidate's contributions and achievements. For nominees in the areas of scholarship or the creative arts, the appropriate academic authorities on campus are normally consulted before a recommendation is made by the [Committee on Honorary Degrees, Distinguished Alumnus Awards and Memorials](#). For nominees in the area of public service and achievement, assessment of a nominee's accomplishments and standing is normally solicited from the appropriate, knowledgeable persons or agencies. Strong support from such knowledgeable authorities in the different areas is essential for the success of a nomination.

After review of all materials, the Committee makes its recommendation to the [Faculty Senate](#). Upon approval by the senate, the recommendation then goes to the president of the university, who then makes a recommendation to the [Board of Trustees](#) for action. The Board has final authority.

[I spoke with a University official this morning who stated that the University of Florida has no upper boundary on the number of honorary degrees it may confer in a given year. Past practice has the institution awarding 3-5 per year (May, Summer and December combined.)]

Penn State University

Nominations for honorary degree recipients welcome Penn State's Committee on Honorary Degrees would appreciate your assistance in developing a list of potential honorary doctoral degree recipients. The committee welcomes nominations of individuals eligible to receive a Penn State honorary degree. The guidelines, developed and approved by the University's Board of Trustees, include the following criteria for eligibility for an honorary degree:

- Sustained achievement and distinction of national or international significance in an activity consonant with the mission of the University.
- The nomination of individuals whose achievements and distinction have not been similarly recognized by a number of other institutions is encouraged.
- Alumni of the University are eligible.
- Persons serving as administrators, faculty, or staff of The Pennsylvania State

University are not eligible, nor are persons currently serving as members of the Board of Trustees, as officials of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and its subordinate units or members of the Legislature, during their terms of office; nor are spouses or immediate family members of the foregoing persons eligible.

All nominations are welcome. Nominations should include the name and a short biography, if one is readily available. Send your nominations to Tom Poole, Vice President for Administration, 201 Old Main, University Park, or via e-mail to tgpl@psu.edu by Friday, April 23, 2010.

Individuals who have been awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Penn State (from 1995 to the present) can be found online at <http://www.psu.edu/ur/poole/honorary.html>. For your convenience, those individuals who have been awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Penn State in the past five years, and those scheduled this year are:

2005

Robert S. Langer, Science
John "Bill" Marriott, Humane Letters

2006

Peter Magrath, Humane Letters
John Carroll, Humane Letters
Robert Horvitz, Science
John "Jack" Horner, Science

2007

Anthony Fauci, Science
Luo Shiming, Science
Anna Quindlen, Humane Letters
Frederick Smith, Humane Letters
Charles Sanders, Science

2008

William Friedkin, Fine Arts
J. Stuart Hunter, Science
Sherry Lansing, Humane Letters
Phillip Sharp, Science
Lee Shulman, Humane Letters
Frederick Smith, Humane Letters

2009

George Koob, Science
Shelly Lazarus, Humane Letters

2010

Peter Agre, Science
Ken Burns, Humane Letters
Ron Suskind, Humane Letters

UNC Chapel Hill

Call for Nominations: 2011 Honorary Degrees
****Deadline extended to January 22, 2010****

November 4, 2009

To the General Faculty

Dear Colleagues:

The [Committee on Honorary Degrees and Special Awards](#) invites your nominations for honorary degrees to be awarded at Commencement 2011. A maximum of five awards is authorized (six if the Commencement speaker is included). Those so honored are nominated by the committee, recommended by the Faculty Council, and approved by the Board of Trustees. Awards are not conferred in absentia or posthumously.

We seek to honor people who have rendered outstanding service to humanity in the world arena, in our nation, in the American South, or our State of North Carolina; people who have made outstanding contributions to knowledge in the world of scholarship; people whose talent and creativity in the world of the arts has enriched our lives; and people whose devotion to and support of our University merits our highest recognition. Members of the Board of Governors or staff of The University of North Carolina or any of its constituent institutions are not eligible. These persons become eligible two years after termination of such status.

Please include appropriate biographical information and a statement in support of your nominee. Nominators often seek supporting letters from others, but the content of such letters, not their number, is what counts. Nominations must be [received in the Office of Faculty Governance](#) no later than Wednesday, January 20, 2010. Emailed nominations are welcome and may be sent to Anne Whisnant at anne_whisnant@unc.edu.

Members of the Committee on Honorary Degrees and Special Awards are Professors Jan Yopp, Chair; Werner Riess, Etta Pisano, Bland Simpson, Robert Anthony, Gene Nichol, and Joseph S. Ferrell (ex officio).

Sincerely yours,
Joseph S. Ferrell

Past 10 years – Honorary Degree recipients

2000

Stuart Eliot Eizenstat LL.D. Diplomat
Joseph Leo Blotner Litt.D. Literary historian
Walter Horace Carter LL.D. Newspaper editor and owner
Charles Justice LL.D. Athlete
Daniel Alexander Okun D.Sci. Scholar; educator

2001

Gladys Hall Coates LL.D. Public service
Dennis Barry Gillings D.Sci. Scholar; founder of Quintiles
William Edward "Billy" Taylor D.F.A. Musician
Thomas Grey Wicker LL.D. Journalist
David Satcher D.Sci. Physician; Surgeon General of the United States

2001 **Special Convocation

Ricardo Lagos Escobar LL.D. President of Chile

2002

Julian Hart Robertson Jr. LL.D. Financier, philanthropist
Verne Edward Chaney Jr. D.Sci Physician and humanitarian
John Reid Edwards LL.D. United States Senator

2003

Drew Saunders Days III LL.D. U.S. Solicitor General; Yale law professor
Clemmie Dixon Spangler Jr. LL.D. Public Service; Business
Reynolds Price Litt.D. Author
William Henry Cosby Jr. LL.D. Actor, Entertainer

2004

William Albert Graham Jr. L.H.D. Scholar; dean Harvard Divinity School
Julius Levonne Chambers J.D. Attorney; civil rights pioneer
Maurice John Koury J.D. Businessman and philanthropist
William Octavius McCoy J.D. Businessman; interim chancellor
William Forrest Winter J.D. Former governor of Mississippi; statesman

2005

Nannerl Overholser Keohane LL.D. Scholar, Duke University president, feminist leader Anand Panyarachun LL.D. Thai Prime Minister, diplomat, world leader
Peter John Gomes D.D. Preacher, author, minister of The Memorial Church, Harvard Frank Borden Hanes, Sr. L.H.D. Philanthropist, author, business leader

2006

Joyce Conseen Dugan LL.D. Educator; Cherokee leader
Thomas Stephen Kenan III LL.D. Philanthropist
Robert Ray Morgan Litt.D. Author and poet
John Shelby Spong L.H.D. Author, clergyman

2007

Madeline Korbel Albright LL.D. Public Service; Diplomacy
H. Jack Geiger D.Sci. Physician; humanitarian
William Ivey Long D.F.A. Costume designer
Richard Wilson Riley LL.D. Public Service; educator
Dean Edwards Smith LL.D. Coach; humanitarian

2008

Peter Courtland Agre D.Sci. Medical researcher; Nobel Prize winner
Philip Palmer Green III D.Sci. Human genome researcher
Heather Munroe-Blum D.Sci. University administrator; psychiatric epidemiologist Anthony Eden Rand LL.D. Public service; champion of the University
Jessye Norman D.Mus. Performing artist in opera and concert

2009

William J. Armfield IV LL.D. Investment executive and philanthropist
Eli N. Evans LL.D. Writer on Jews in the south, nonprofit leader
Charles Sanders D.Sci. Physician and medical executive
Helen Maynor Sheirbeck LL.D. Native American activist and educational leader
Lee Marshall Smith Litt.D. Prolific southern author
Desmond M. Tutu D.D. Nobel Peace Prize winner and South African anti-apartheid campaigner